

## Miscellaneous

## LEE'S CONFESSION.

The Story of His Early Life and Conversion to Mormonism.

## HE JOINS THE DANITES.

His Career as a Missionary, a Financier, a Legislator and a Judge.

## SEALED TO HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW.

How the Mountain Meadows Massacre Was Planned.

## ROLL OF THE ASSASSINS.

Organizing an Indian Attack on the Emigrant Camp.

## SWORN TO SECRECY OR DEATH.

Brigham Young Indorses the Crime and Supports the Brethren.

## THE DOOMED.

Pioche, Nev., March 21, 1877.

John D. Lee was indicted with several others by the Grand Jury of Beaver county, Utah Territory, on September 24, 1874, for the crime of murder committed by him in the part he took at the Mountain Meadows massacre in Washington county, Utah Territory, on September 16, 1857, at which time 120 men, women and children, passing through the Territory on their way to California, were, after a day's fighting, decimated.

by Mormons and Indians. All of the emigrants who were old enough to disclose anything of the butchery were killed on the spot. Seventeen small children were spared from the massacre, the train was plundered and the most of the property turned over to the Mormon Church at Cedar City. The bloody clothing, stripped from the mutilated bodies, was sold at auction by order of the Church authorities at Cedar City, Utah. Lee was first tried at Beaver City, Utah, in the Territorial District Court, in July, 1875, Judge Boreman presiding. At this trial the jury disagreed. Nine were for acquittal and three for conviction. A second trial was had on the same indictment, in September, 1876, in the same Court and before the same Judge, resulting in a verdict of guilty. Lee was then sentenced to be shot on January 26, 1877, he choosing that mode of execution, the laws of Utah permitting a party capitally convicted to choose the mode of his death. On an appeal to the Supreme Court of the Territory the judgment of the lower Court was confirmed at the January term in 1877, and the sentence of the lower Court was ordered to be enforced at the March term in 1877. Judge Boreman set Friday, March 23, 1877, as the day of execution.

## Lee's Confession.

After sentence of death had been passed upon Lee in September, 1876, he made a full confession in writing of his participation in the Mountain Meadows massacre, which document he delivered to me directed him to have the same read after his execution. The following is the confession made by Lee:—

## His Place of Birth and Early Life.

"My name is John D. Lee. I was born on September 6, 1812, at Kaskaskia, Randolph county, Ill. My father belonged to the Catholic Church and I was christened in the faith. My parents died while I was still a child and my boyhood was one of trial and hardships. I married Agathe Ann Woolsey in 1833 and moved to Fayette county, Ill., on Rock Creek, where I became wealthy.

## Embraces Mormonism.

I read and believed the Book of Mormon. I sold my property in Illinois and moved to Fairview, in Missouri, in 1837, where I joined the Mormon Church and became intimately acquainted with Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and other leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

I was subsequently initiated into the Order of Danites, at its first formation. This Order was solemnly sworn to obey all the orders of the priesthood of the Mormon Church, to do any and all things commanded. The Destroying Angels of the Mormon Church were selected from this organization.

## An Active Member.

I took an active part as a Mormon soldier in the conflicts between the people of Missouri and the Mormons which made Jackson county, Mo., historic ground. When the Mormons were expelled from Missouri I was one of the first to settle at Nauvoo, Ill., where I took an active part in all that was done for the Church or city. I had charge of the construction of many of the public buildings there. Was a policeman and body guard of Joseph Smith at Nauvoo. After his death I held the same position to Brigham Young, who succeeded Smith as prophet, priest and revelator in the Church. I was Recorder for the Quorum of Seventy, head clerk of the Church, and organized the priesthood into the Order of Sentinels. I took all the degrees in the Endowment House and stood high in the priesthood. I traveled extensively through the United States as a Mormon missionary, and acted as trader and financial agent for the Church from the death of Joseph Smith until the settlement at Salt Lake City, in Utah.

## The Settlement of Utah.

I selected the sites for the Mormon settlements and cities in Utah Territory. I held offices in the Territory, and was a member of the Mormon Legislature and Probate Judge of Washington county, Utah.

## Polygamy and Sealing.

Immediately after Joseph Smith received the revelation concerning polygamy I was informed of its doctrine by said Joseph Smith and the apostles. I believed in the doctrine, and have been sealed

to eighteen women, three of whom were sealed to me and one was the mother of my children.

I was an honored man in the Church, flattered and regarded by Brigham Young and the apostles until 1865, when I was cut off from the Church and selected as scapegoat to suffer for and bear the sins of my people.

## His Confession a Duty.

As a duty to myself and mankind I now confess all that I know and all that I did at the Mountain Meadows massacre, without animosity to any one, shielding none, giving facts as they existed.

## The Massacre Ordered by the Church.

Those with me on that occasion were acting under orders from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The horrid deeds then committed were done as a duty which we believed we owed to God and our Church.

We were all sworn to secrecy before and after the massacre. The penalty for giving information concerning the same was death. As I am to suffer death for what I then did and have been betrayed, both by those who gave me the orders to act and the most active of my assistants. I now give the world the true facts as they exist, and tell why the massacre was committed and who were active participants.

## Brigham Young Responsible.

The Mountain Meadows massacre was the result of the direct teachings of Brigham Young, and it was done by the orders of those high in authority in the Mormon community. The immediate orders for the massacre were issued by Colonel Dame, Lieutenant Colonel Isaac C. Haight and the Council at Cedar City, Utah.

I held no position either in the civil or military departments, or in the Church

have no right to question them. You must obey as you are commanded."

man. He was met half way by the emigrants, and they held a parley with him. Bateman then returned and reported that the emigrants would surrender their arms and do as they had been requested. The Mormon soldiers then marched out to within 200 yards of the emigrants. They next took wagons and went to the camp and stated their orders.

## The Surrender.

The emigrants then surrendered and put their arms, the sick and wounded and children into the wagons. While they were burying their dead men the emigrants burst into tears and said they feared treachery. As soon as the wagons were loaded the train was started. The emigrants marched in single file, the women and large children being ahead, then the men came.

## The Butchery.

When the wagons were half a mile off the firing commenced. The Indians killed all the women and large children. The Mormons killed the men. The drivers with me killed the sick and wounded. We saved seventeen of the children. The dead were stripped and mutilated and the corpses left on the field. The Mormons camped on the field. The next day Lieutenant-Col. Haight, Col. Dame and other leaders came over. Finally they quarrelled. Lieutenant-Col. Haight said to Colonel Dame, "You ordered it, and damn you, it is too late to go back!" Dame said he did not know there were so many of them. We buried the dead and drove the cattle to the Iron Springs.

## Selling the Spoils.

All the wagons and other property were sold in Cedar City by order of the church authorities. All these orders were fully obeyed. The church was attending the mas-

## The Path of Silence.

The brethren were again sworn to secrecy. This was also done by order of the church, which was then at war with the United States Government.

## A High Priest's Wishes.

George A. Smith, who was the second in the priesthood, having just happened to be there giving orders, visited the Indians. He said he came to instruct the people to let none of the emigrants go through without passing from the original manuscript now in my possession and gives, so far as such a condensed report can do, a complete statement of the acts disclosed in the statement of John D. Lee which relate to the Mountain Meadows massacre.

## BOB TOOMBS.

He Thinks Hayes's Policy a "Good Thing for the Boys."

General Robert Toombs has been in the city during the past few days. He talks with his usual freedom about men and things, and his comments on the situation are unreserved. A Herald correspondent talked with him yesterday, when the conversation naturally turned on the new President's Southern policy. "My advice to the boys," said Toombs, "is to take all the offices they can get. They are poor, and they have a right to all the offices in the South. I should like to see Hayes tested. If he is as full of performances as he is of promise, the boys will have a good time."

Correspondent—Do you think the distribution of offices among the Southern Democrats will have a tendency to divide the solid South?

General Toombs (laughing and looking ahead)—Does it demoralize a whale to get a good breakfast? Its effect will be surprisingly different.

Correspondent—How is that?

Gen. Toombs—Why, it will utterly demoralize the radicals. Do you suppose the men who fattened on the South are willing to sit quietly and see the offices appropriated by Democrats? No, sir; there is neither complacency nor complacency in the Radical politics. There will be revolt. Whatever motives may prompt Hayes to give us home rule and self-government in the South, the results will be in the interest of patriotism. It will break up the Republican party.—Cor. N. Y. Herald.

Brigham Young was then and for many years after fully satisfied with me and my act. He gave me three wives and appointed me Probate Judge of Washington county.

Nothing but cowardice has made him desert me now. Fifty head of cattle were sold in Salt Lake City by the authorities for merchandise. The emigrants had 450, making 500 cattle in all. They had only a little money. When Cradlebaugh came to Utah, and went to Mountain Meadows, Brigham Young came with him; he then knew all about the massacre and the fate of the emigrants.

They were the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and children of the men who killed the saints in Jackson county, and afterwards killed the Prophet in Carthage jail. Their children are in the poorhouse; their relatives now refuse them because they are the children of thieves, outlaws and murderers. I have been told there are many brethren who are willing to inform on those who did this thing. I hope there is no truth in the rumor. I hope no such person lives.

"If there is, I tell you what your fate will be. Unless you repent at once, keep secret all you know, and protect each other, you will die a dog's death. You will soon go to hell as damned, lost souls. Let me hear no more of treachery among my people." Any one who had proved traitor there would have met the destroying angel at once.

After I reported to Brigham Young I went home and met Lieutenant-Col. Haight and gave him a full report of Young's statement. Haight said: "Well done, faithful servant; you shall receive a celestial reward for your services. You have deserved well of God and the Church."

I next went to work to write up an account of the massacre, laying it to the Indians. I wrote a long letter, the same as has been introduced in evidence against me. Brigham Young knew that it was false and written to save the Mormon Church.

His report to the government was a part of the plan to save the Mormons from blame.

It was years afterwards before I knew that I had been made a tool of by the leaders. I only obeyed the orders of my superiors. I then believed I was serving God and would receive a celestial reward.

It was the first plan to have none but Indians take part in the massacre, but William C. Stewart, Joel White and Benjamin Arthur were coming to Mountain Meadows on Wednesday night; they met young Aden and another man going from the emigrants to Cedar City for help. They told of the Indian attack and the fate of the emigrants.

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